Minimizing Launch Challenges:
Successfully Going to Market

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THE IDEAL SCENARIO

In an ideal situation, a company successfully brings a new product or service to market only after having utilized a clearly defined process and having developed a solid, yet flexible, plan; and it does this only once it has ascertained both a clear market need and a defined revenue opportunity. In this perfect environment, Product Management discovers this unique market need in a timely fashion and verifies its precise window of competitive opportunity. Product Management then reviews this need with Sales and together they measure a quantifiable opportunity.

Next, Product Management works with Technology, Operations, and Marketing to generate a strong business case that will support the design, development, launch, marketing, distribution, and sales of the new product or service. After the business case is approved, cross-functional teams begin as soon as possible to develop a detailed Go-to-Market (GTM) plan and set a launch date.

In this ideal world, the perfect product or service is released at the exact moment its target customer needs it—with the perfect marketing mix required for generating the ideal awareness and demand and the perfect sales mix required for its immediate sales and distribution success. In the ideal scenario, even if the product or service release date must slip due to unforeseen circumstances, the launch team is prepared for creative alternatives that keep sales activity in the pipeline, and revenue streaming in.

THE REALITY

If you are in marketing or sales, you know that the reality of bringing a new product or service to market is usually far less ideal.

The reality of many launches is that they tend to be very intense, and often times problematic—they can be rocky from start to finish. Communication breakdowns throughout any stage in the launch process can cause unforeseen challenges. And often your sales team doesn't have all the tools they need for success.

The chances are, if you are in marketing, you know all about the reality of going to market and you've rarely witnessed a perfect product or service launch. But, can you pinpoint exactly what problems make your specific launch process so challenging? Because once you do, you are that much closer to finding solutions that will help your organization achieve the ideal scenario.

The following is a snapshot of some of the most often identified problems today's launches face:

- Lack of Customer and Sales Input
- Delayed Product Release Dates
- A Static Go-To-Market Plan That Can't Adapt to Change
- A Poor Launch Management Process
- Lack of Dedicated Launch Staffing and Budget Resources

Few of these challenges facing launch teams are mutually exclusive. Because they are interdependent, weakness in any one category can cause serious launch problems for a company.

Let's examine these common problems and briefly evaluate how their causes relate to a greater lack of launch process, planning, management, and evaluation.

Lack of Customer and Sales Involvement

Ideally, a top go-to-market priority for all successful marketing teams is communicating successfully with internal and external customer bases. However, statistics show that this is not always the reality. Customers are often forgotten and sales teams are not always aligned nor held accountable in the launch process.

A 2007 annual survey of marketing trends,[1] performed by Next Level Strategic Marketing Group, a Pleasantville, NY-based brand strategy firm, found that the single biggest regret cited by marketers was "not investing more effort to understand what makes their customers tick" prior to launch.

According to this study of 82 senior marketing executives in various industries, **28%** of respondents say that when they put together their go-to-market plans, they *did not consider the customer sufficiently* and that they "would have invested more effort in learning what motivates and influences their customers." This same **28%** resolved "to spend more time and money understanding their consumers and how to better meet their needs" for future launches.

Ideally, on the other side of this communication equation, divergent corporate teams are perfectly aligned behind collectively planned strategies and coordinated goals for every launch. After all, the 2007 CMO Council Marketing Outlook survey cites that **76%** of marketing executives at companies with revenues over $500 million responded that aligning Marketing with Sales and demand generation is a top priority.[2] And according to the 2007 Schneider and Associates Marketing Launch Survey Results,[3] "sales force preparation" is identified by **55%** of its respondents as "the most important contributing factor to launch success." Both of these statistics would imply a strong involvement of sales forces in launch planning and the inherent alignment of all launch stakeholders.

However, companies cannot properly prepare their sales forces when they have not carefully consulted with them beforehand to determine what they need to sell most effectively.

A finding by the American Marketing Association indicates "**50-90%** of materials created by marketing to support sales are never used by sales people."[4] And according to the CMO Council,[5] "Salespeople are spending approximately **40%** of their time preparing customer-facing deliverables while leveraging less than **50%** of the materials created for them by marketing."

These statistics speak clearly that companies are *not* aligning these teams. Nor are they likely to be including sales organizations in their initial go-to-market and launch planning sessions, as a rule, because if they were, Sales would be getting the support materials they requested up front and they would be using these materials 100%. Furthermore, from a financial standpoint, if a large percentage of marketing programs and tools are only marginally useful to the field due to this lack of communication, it would appear that the marketing and sales support materials developed by many organizations are, in fact, a waste of time and money.

The only way to enhance customer and sales team involvement is if the company makes a commitment to greater communication—specifically, centralized communication—throughout the launch process. Sales organizations must be included and held accountable throughout the go-to-market planning stage so that they can request the productive programs and tools they know they will need to advance sales and increase revenue. The opinion of the customer must

[1] Next Level SMG (www.nextlevelsmg.com) 2007 Brand Strategy Trends Survey; http://www.pr-usa.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=50625&Itemid=9
[2] http://www.cmocouncil.org/programs/current/marketing_outlook08.asp
[3] http://webmarketcentral.blogspot.com/2007/11/new-report-how-to-successfully-launch.html

[4] Michael T. Bosworth, John Holland, CustomerCentric Selling, (New York: McGraw Hill, 2003) p. 13.
[5] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sales referencing Glen Petersen, The Profit Maximization Paradox, (Charleston: BOOKSURGE Publishing, 2008).

also be considered throughout all stages of product launch, either via traditional customer research or focus groups, or less traditionally, via the inclusion of interstitial marketing programs that serve to ramp up customer involvement in (and excitement for) the launch.

After all, without including customer communication and requiring Sales' involvement upfront and continually throughout the launch process, an organization can get locked into a blind process. As a result, the organization cannot easily respond to even the smallest change, slip, or new requirement, which means the go-to-market process can be thrown completely off course, very quickly—resulting in longer sales cycles, or poor results.

Delayed Product Release Dates

In the ideal situation, every single product or service launch would happen on time and on schedule. However, if you've witnessed a launch before, you already know that the slipping of release dates is common. The statistics speak clearly on the frequency of these delays:

- "**70%** of product launches are delayed"[6]
- "**20%** of these experience three or more delays"[7]
- "Just **30%** of planned Internet-based launch campaigns are on time despite being more direct-to-consumer and relatively free of numerous distribution issues."[8]

The reasons for launch delays can be endless. You may be familiar with some of the typical reasons for these delays, which (studies show) include:

- a competitor entering the market with a similar solution prior to your release
- an executive re-prioritization that moves your release to a lower priority
- lack of staffing and resources due to inadequate allocation up front
- surpassing your allotted budget because of inadequate planning
- QA or Engineering-related issues that tie up production
- distribution snafus due to a lack of centralized communication

Depending on the length of the delay, the impact to the revenue expectations can be devastating to an organization in the short term. But even worse, continual release delays—or even sticking to unrealistic timelines and rushing to market with products or services that are not ready merely in order to meet deadlines—affect a company's reputation over the long run. When customers experience repetitive delays, a company begins to reap consistently negative feedback and its brand can become negatively identified in the marketplace. When this happens, customers begin to suspect that the poor launch timing may be indicative of a poor product or service development process overall, which can cause even loyal customers to lose faith in the brand altogether.

Trying to Adapt to Change with a Static GTM Plan

We all know the reality is that every market is subject to change, even within a very short time. In the technology sphere, for example, the potential for technological change and market shifting is so common that it has a well-known name: Moore's Law![9]

Ideally, the product or service development response to any market change is to adapt the requirements for new products and services subsequent to this change prior to their release. After all, typically, "**only 52%** of originally allocated requirements appear in the final"[10] launch.

[6] http://www.schneiderpr.com/news/SA_B2B_Report_Final.pdf, p. 11.
[7] Schneider, p. 11.
[8] SDL Tridion survey, http://www.marketingcharts.com/interactive/marketing-execs-most-web-based-campaigns-dont-happen-on-time-2353/
[9] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moore's_law

[10] CHAOS Chronicles. v3.0. (West. Yarmouth: Standish Group, 2003). http://www.standish group.comlchaos/toc.php. C. Ebert, J. DeMan, Requirements uncertainty: influencing factors and concrete improvements, Software Engineering, 2005. ICSE 2005. Proceedings. 27th International Conference, Issue , 15-21 May 2005 pp. 553 - 560.

When requirements change, all aspects of the launch planning and documentation must be able to adapt quickly. When messaging and positioning strategies must be altered in the middle of the product or service launch planning process, it is guaranteed that this will cause a significant impact on the launch plan, in addition to the resultant restructuring of launch deliverables and schedules, and ultimately effecting the GTM plan. It is these last minute alterations that provide both stress to the team and unexpected changes requiring astute management.

Despite the existence of a clear business case and a defined path to follow, problems with deliverables will arise. This will be especially true when the vision of the business case is not translated into *actionable* strategies within the GTM plan—or worse, when the GTM plan is developed once, but then is not updated throughout the course of the launch and post-launch.

Go-to-Market plans are often figuratively written in stone. Because they are rarely considered to be *live* documents, they are not updated continually and do not facilitate change. As a result, they cannot adapt quickly and flexibly enough to additional requirements or market changes.

A 2008 CMO Council study asked over 1,000 senior marketing and sales executives to assess their "own go-to-market effectiveness." The results:
- Over **46%** of respondents "gave themselves failing grades"
- **29%** considered "themselves quite effective"
- **6%** gave "their capabilities the highest marks"[11]

Time-tested executives understand that a GTM plan is not set in stone, and can be strategically recalibrated as needed. A flexible, organic GTM plan is critical. This provides an effective "living" outline with step-by-step market strategy and clearly identifies a process to follow. It also allows the plan to be strategically altered as additional factors come into play that require changes. This is a priority for successful launches.

Poor Launch Management Process

With organizations running lean and mean, product and service launches are only a tiny fraction, on average less than **50%**,[12] of any given Product Marketing manager's responsibilities. Most of these folks are simply spread too thin to focus all their energy and time on the launch.

When it comes to launch management, **84%** of Fortune 500s[13] utilize a dedicated launch management process with an "overall launch boss"[14] overseeing the cross-functional organizational management of all the involved teams. However, this role usually only touches each department that is responsible for a component of the launch, such as Sales, Service, Support, Engineering, Operations, Manufacturing, Marketing, Finance, and other administrative departments.

When it comes to *actual* marketing ownership, the launch management, scheduling and deliverables are usually handled by individuals in marketing roles, typically Product Marketing and/or Product Management.

At a fundamental level, it is pretty clear from studies done that most companies struggle to define and understand, exactly, who "owns" the launch process. Schneider and Associates' 2007 Business-to-Business Launch Survey, an extensive online survey of 98 companies, discovered there was a significant difference in the success of a launch based on who was responsible.

[11] *Driving the Bottom Line from the Front Line*; http://www.cmocouncil.org/resources/form_bottom_line.asp
[12] CMO 2008 Marketing Outlook Survey
[13] Schneider and Associates' 2007 Business-to-Business Launch Survey
[14] According to a study by OnTarget, Inc. 68% of Fortune 500 executives surveyed said their companies used an structured launch process.

Overall, this study found that launches managed by staff closely involved with the marketing of the specific product are generally more successful:

- **36%** of successful launches were more likely to be managed by Product Managers
- **23%** of less successful launches were headed up by CEOs or presidents
- **16%** of highly successful launches were headed up by CEOs or presidents
- **66%** of less successful launches were managed by senior marketing personnel
- **43%** of very successful launches were overseen by senior marketing personnel

Data shows that team-managed launches are generally more successful than those managed by a single staff member.[15]

- **60%** of very successful launches relied on more than five team members
- **34%** of less successful launches were managed by a team of five or more

A Lack of Dedicated Staffing and Budget Resources

Companies consistently report additional workforce problems that surface when there is no clear launch management process in place. Launch management is usually a mere fraction of the assigned launch overseers' responsibilities and duties. Therefore, these staff members are often overwhelmed with tasks and other work unrelated to launch. They simply do not have enough time to devote to and drive the proper planning and execution of the launch itself, let alone a clearly defined process.

The 2008 Marketing Outlook Survey by the CMO Council surveyed over 3,000 top marketing executives worldwide and found that, in addition to managing launches and traditional functions, such as branding, websites, advertising and public relations:

- **44%** also reported jurisdiction over Business Development
- **37%** reported additional responsibility for Distribution & Channels
- **37%** reported managing pricing
- **30%** listed that they were also in charge of Product Management for a specific line or lines

The lack of an allocated launch budget can be another area of difficulty in the GTM process. Ideally, a company allocates in advance exactly the budget it requires to adequately support the number of launches on its Product Roadmap.

It can be difficult to allocate proper funding and to schedule budgets when launch dates slip. Furthermore, marketing budgets are typically allocated by quarter, even if the launch itself cannot be confined to a quarter. All of this creates a huge domino effect that results in poor budget planning capabilities.

Realistically, while they may have funds to spend, very few organizations dedicate and assign a specific launch budget.[16] Or worse, Product Marketing may not own the budget associated with their launch programs, and yet is ultimately accountable for the product launch process.

According to respondents to a Schneider & Associates' survey:

- **49%** of companies utilized a specific launch budget
  - **54%** of these established their launch budget during the go-to-market planning phase
  - **8%** established their launch budget during the initial concept phase
- **33%** did not use a specific launch budget at all
- **18%** did not even know if their organization had a launch budget[17]

[15] Schneider & Associates 2007 study
[16] Some studies show 7-10% of firms allocate launch budgets
[17] Schneider & Assoc. survey

Often, launch teams must "borrow" or utilize funds from the general department or corporate budget on an ad hoc basis. This often means that their resources can suddenly dry up when the budget is re-funneled to another project or is not available.

Those companies with defined launch budgets reported various sources for their launch funding.[18]
- **38%** of launch budgets are allocated from Marketing
- **12%** from R&D budgets
- **25%** report getting their launch funds from project budgets
- **17%** report that their launch budget comes from the overall sales budget
- **29%** say their launch budget is allocated from a generic corporate budget

Without dedicated fiscal resources, teams often need to pitch their budget requests to the executive management and rely on last minute—or late—funding approval. When the executive management does not fully comprehend the budget required to fund a new product initiative, launch teams are often left in the lurch, having to make do with limited resources.

No matter what the resource constraints are, be they staffing or financial, they can be alleviated if the organization is willing to allocate specific resources up front to meet the pre-defined, planned requirements of every launch.

WHAT REALLY WORKS?
Is the ideal product or service launch scenario within easy reach? Perhaps not. However, while the launch process is never perfect, your team can begin making immediate improvements if it commits to a solid, continuous communication strategy and to practicing the tips outlined below.

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"Commit to and create a defined launch process with clear stages to include Planning, Creation, Implementation, and Evaluation."

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Use a Replicable Process
Developing and sticking to an overall launch process is critical to success. A process provides a roadmap and clearly defines which expectations can be capably met by each stakeholder involved. With a replicable process in place, each subsequent launch can follow the same steps up the same ladder to success.

A launch process should follow at minimum four key stages:
- Planning
- Creation
- Launching/Implementation
- Evaluation

All functions responsible for a component of launch should plan their deliverables around these stages. The specific launch problems identified can all be alleviated via the commitment to a defined launch process.

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[18] Ibid.

Improve Customer Input & Sales Accountability

When launching a new product or service, in the ideal scenario it benefits you to communicate with your potential customers, including your own sales organization, first.

Implement a process for gathering and assessing important customer data prior to launching your product or service. Understanding this data will increase effectiveness along every stage of your launch.

> ## "Involve customers and hold sales teams accountable for the success of the planning of the launch."

In the development of your Go-to-Market plan, your customer knowledge and insight will help ensure that your product addresses an actual need and your strategies are viable. In the creation of your messaging and marketing content, it will help you successfully communicate your product or service's strategic value and attractive benefits. Upon the implementation of your launch, having customer and sales input at hand will help in myriad ways, from timing to distribution, to replicable sales and corporate success. And finally, this information can even help you determine benchmarks and evaluate the success of your launch.

Involving Sales from the get go, and throughout various checkpoints, is the easiest way to help make Sales accountable for the success of the planning and the launch.

Align Your Team

Ideally, divergent corporate teams should be perfectly aligned behind collectively planned strategies and coordinated goals for every launch. This, too, can best be implemented via an established process with widely communicated expectations.

If, as the statistics cited in this paper indicated, a large percentage of marketing programs and tools are only marginally useful to the sales field (and financially, a waste of time and money), the only way that this will change is if a commitment is made to greater communication between Sales and Marketing. Sales organizations must be included—and held accountable—throughout the Go-to-Market planning stage so that they can request the productive programs and tools they know they will need to advance sales and increase revenue.

> ## "Use a point person to gather consensus, communicate, and align stakeholders around defined goals and objectives."

A recognized factor that helps teams commit to this alignment around product launch is utilizing an outsider (or nominating one person to be) in a mediation role at the beginning of the planning stage. The person in this role can gather consensus between the various executive and organizational teams involved in the launch. He or she can diplomatically rally individuals with divergent ideas into one cohesive launch team with clearly identified shared goals and objectives.

Be Flexible and Adapt to Change

In a perfect world, every single product launch or service would happen on time and on schedule. One would be completely prepared for delays and market changes, and would therefore have numerous contingencies in place that would keep the revenue stream alive and the product or service release momentum building.

It is well known that it helps to be flexible about the timing of your launch. In fact, **49%** of companies cited as having highly successful launches said it "is important to be flexible about launch timing."[19] A lesser-known fact is that it is critical, for launch success today, to create this "opportunity to be flexible" during the planning stage. In short, planning for workable contingencies—such as new marketing programs or launching an existing, prime product or service to a new vertical—means that they can be workable contingencies.

This planning should, by necessity, include scheduling and budgeting in advance. Flexibility is also easier to achieve when creative program and content alternatives are also developed in advance.

"Plan to build flexibility into every stage of each launch."

One last way that makes it possible to be flexible about delayed product or service launches is perhaps one of the most important to consider. Be aware of the necessity to build sales momentum by focusing launch activities throughout the overall lifecycle of a product or service. Spreading resources across the continuum of the lifecycle promotes longer, stronger growth. Doing so takes the launch, and sales, focus off a single dramatic marketing drive for sales opportunities and instead widens the opportunity field for every product or service.

Be flexible with your launch planning efforts. The reality of launch is that it is ever changing, and needs to adapt to the latest market and competitive changes, as well as changes in requirements. Therefore, build a process that has this flexibility at every stage.

Develop Actionable Go-To-Market Strategies

Ideally, the business case sets the foundation for a thorough Go-to-Market plan. The GTM plan defines actionable strategies, with specific objectives and measurable benchmarks in place to determine success, regardless of slips in the scheduled launch date.

A successful GTM plan not only will align your teams and customers and lay the path for bringing new products or services to market seamlessly, but will also include those contingency plans for the continual build-up of sales momentum that are actually *independent of the product or service launch date.*

The actionable steps in a GTM must be set forth very clearly and be adopted by the team as a whole. When everyone is on board with his or her responsibilities and aligns them face-to-face with the GTM plan, the result is a structured, yet flexible, launch process that enables those iterative strategies for maintaining sales momentum and ultimately results in a successful launch.

Therefore, it is critical that in creating a GTM plan, your team first understands and hones your vision—*almost as if this crucial planning stage itself was a product launch*—so that your deliverables can be pulled together from clear objectives, goals and strategies, and not merely based on an abstract "launch date."

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[19] http://www.schneiderpr.com/news/SA_B2B_Report_Final.pdf

In this way, the focus is not merely placed on getting the product or service launched to the market by a particular date. A good GTM plan accounts for the inevitable schedule slips.

View and communicate the GTM plan as a *live* document that can flexibly and organically evolve as the launch process unfolds. Make sure it is centrally available to all stakeholders and team members so that ongoing changes made to the plan are disseminated easily and universally known and agreed upon.

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"Use a flexible, 'organic' GTM plan
that is universally accessible to all stakeholders."

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Within this GTM plan, identify and utilize contingencies or "what if" scenarios, i.e. "what if a launch slips 3-6 weeks?" Be prepared to identify additional programs and tools that can be leveraged. In case of a launch slip, is there a *mini launch* of a particular product feature—or a portion of the technology—that you could release to the market in the meantime to generate interest and market awareness earlier? Are there some additional programs or content you can plan for so that, once the GTM is ready to launch, everything is in place should you need flexible, intermediate contingencies? Build that flexibility into your GTM plan.

Solid Launch Budgeting and Management

To alleviate fiscal worries and launch budget deficits, organizations can plan and set aside a dedicated launch budget for product or service releases prior to beginning the launch process. This enables the GTM launch team to ensure they have executive support for a budget that can implement not only the launch, but also the contingencies in the GTM plan.

Preparing and allocating a separate GTM budget relieves launch management from having to rely on last minute funding requests. It also ensures recognized alignment with corporate financial goals.

When the launch team itself owns the launch budget, both the team's perceived and actual authority is strengthened within the organization. Conversely, whenever the ownership or management of the launch budget is essentially broken in half, or shared within the organization, a chasm results, into which falls authority. This causes a deficiency of actual authority and creates confusion around which role is responsible for which deliverable and activity. Staffers begin questioning: Who makes the launch planning decisions? The launch team or the department that holds the purse strings?

This confusion creates gaps in accountability and results in management chaos. Therefore it is critical that a GTM team is charged with the authority—*and* the budget—to ensure that stakeholders are accountable for their deliverables.

Ultimately, in the ideal scenario, every facet along the launch continuum takes place within a clearly defined, managed process, complete with a GTM team and a Launch Manager. The team is 100% dedicated to stewarding the product or service along its launch path and ensuring each benchmark is met and quantified. The Launch Manager aggregates and distributes responsibilities according to the GTM plan and disseminates status information all along the way, so that every single team member and management stakeholder is kept abreast of the launch progress. The Launch Manager keeps everyone in the loop and addresses scheduling conflicts and backup plans in real time.

In the Schneider & Associates study, as well as other studies, multidisciplinary launch teams formed early in the launch

process were found to be the most effective in planning successful launch strategies. And the most successful of these teams also included external support from marketing firms with explicit launch expertise, or other agencies, such as public relations or advertising agencies.

Ideally, launch activities should be championed by a dedicated, external "steward," whose job is *launch control*, defined as managing the entire range of launch planning and implementation. This key external player maintains objectivity. He or she can look out for the overall interests of all product/service stakeholders and ensure the effective management and coordination for a timely and successful launch.

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"Rely on a centralized launch
'steward' and a dedicated launch
budget for greater success."

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Organize and charge a separate GTM team to be accountable for the budget, management, and success of the launch. Also, it is important to define a "steward" role charged with anticipating and communicating the impact of inevitable schedule changes to each functional team. Organizations often successfully turn towards hiring an external resource to perform the launch function. Relying on a launch steward who is external to the organization can alleviate many of the problems caused by a broken launch process.

The Solution – Getting Started

We've presented you with a variety of common problems, along with solutions and tips to help you get started improving your own launch capabilities. How can you best implement these basic communication and centralized management solutions and begin to see vast improvement? In a number of ways: you can utilize your own dedicated internal staff members, you can look to 1099 contractors to fill in the gaps, or you can partner with an external resource.

Dedicating an internal staff member to address these tips and get you started on improving your launch process can work. However, as we've seen above, two clear drawbacks of this are that he or she may get pulled in many directions, have to wear many hats, and perhaps burn out. He or she also will not be backed by an entire team of launch and program experts.

Hiring a 1099 hourly contractor on an as-needed basis can be inexpensive, and often the cost can come out of a corporate staffing budget. However, how can you be sure this person has launch expertise and knowledge of your product? And what happens when they leave—do they take away all the company knowledge, process and ability they've developed? Can they be re-hired again when you need them for the next launch?

Instead, hiring an experienced external partner with tried and true launch resources adds much greater value and provides a much higher ROI. Also, because this resource will develop a familiarity with your organization's launch process, channels, history, product lines, etc. it can much more easily and readily "jump in" at a moment's notice and "roll up their sleeves." As it becomes a true launch partner, the additional work this resource takes on for your team can help reduce stress and complexity associated with launch management.

Collaborating with a launch partner means that at critical launch times you can rely on their launch management experience, including their existing management templates and documentation systems, market expertise, and economical value.

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Additionally, once they have proven themselves on short projects, external launch partners develop value to your organization as a sustainable resource that can provide a deep ROI. As their valuable expertise and knowledge specific to your products or services and organization grows, you can turn to these experienced launch partners for the development and management of extended programs.

The best, most effective alternative is to hire Exact Market.

Exact Market can partner with your product and program marketing and sales teams to provide product launch solutions ranging from strategic planning to tactical implementation. Utilizing our proven management method, we unify marketing and sales teams around a shared vision to successfully launch new offerings. We have the market knowledge, product management experience, templates, documents, and launch systems you need. And more than that, as effective change agents, we regularly and seamlessly help our clients develop improved processes.

Exact Market's logical, efficient process results in focused goal setting and strategies that successfully drive your products and services to market quickly. Working together with us, you will benefit from a continued return on your investment. We operate as your launch management partner, dedicated to providing you with a repeatable process that is transferable to future launches, making each launch smoother and more successful. You can hire us again and again to help you bring your products or services to market.

Conclusion

Overall, it appears that what really works for launch success is to treat the launch process as a distinct marketing phase with its own planning process, budget, staffing requirements, management structure, communication requirements, and success metrics. Along with this, you should include your customers and sales force in the upfront planning process; and you should properly align your launch teams' goals and communication.

While nothing can completely eliminate the common challenges shared by virtually every company—nor guarantee the ideal product or service launch—it is clear that doing this greatly increases your chance to achieve real world launch success.

Ultimately, you are not alone in facing these challenges. Having a partner that is solely focused on your launch is a great alternative as they can address launch management challenges and provide immediate solutions that can help alleviate launch burdens.

If you would like to learn more about how Exact Market can help you succeed, contact us at: (408) 335-0386 or email sales@exactmarket.com.

About Exact Market

Working with Fortune 500 companies to provide solutions from strategic planning to programs implementation, Exact Market unifies marketing and sales teams around a shared vision to successfully launch new offerings and enhance sales with results that exceed expectations.